



Riversdale Primary School

"A nurturing, ambitious and values led school."

Music Policy

Date: 24th September 2025

Review Date: 23rd September 2028



“The sheer joy of music making can feed the soul of a school community, enriching each student while strengthening the shared bonds of support and trust which make a great school.”
Model Music Curriculum (2021)

Article 28:
You have the right to education.

Article 29:
You have the right to education which develops your personality, respect for other’s rights and the environment.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2013) ‘National curriculum in England: music programmes of study’
- DfE (2017) ‘Statutory framework for the early year’s foundation stage’
- DfE (2021) ‘Model Music Curriculum: Key Stages 1 to 2’ (Non-Statutory)

INTENT

Our music curriculum aims to provide each child with a high-quality, inspirational and engaging education that fosters an appreciation and enjoyment of music as an art form. Music plays a vital role in developing creativity and expressing emotions and supports pupils in developing key personal attributes such as self-confidence and resilience. In addition, research has shown that a high-quality music curriculum has a positive cross-curricular impact in other subject areas such as maths, writing, and art.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our objectives in the teaching of music are:

- to explore how sounds are made, and can be organised into musical structures;
- to show how music is produced by a variety of instruments;
- to teach how music is composed and written down;
- to examine the relevance of when, where and why a given piece of music was written;
- to develop the interrelated skills of composition, performance and appreciation;
- to explore the music of composers from across the world and throughout history.

CURRICULUM PROGRESSION

Based on the National Curriculum, senior and subject leaders have opted to implement the Kapow! Music Curriculum. This scheme provides a clear curriculum progression map which identifies how the music specific knowledge and skills develop over a pupils’ time at the school. This progression ensures that pupils build increasingly rich schemata, revisiting and deepening their understanding of key concepts as they move through the primary years. Each year group’s objectives are linked, growing in complexity and independence to foster mastery and ensure alignment with National Curriculum expectations.

The curriculum is structured around five key technical domains: Listening and Evaluating, Creating Sound, Notation, Improvising and Composing, and Performing (singing and playing). There are opportunities to recognise and apply the inter-related dimensions of music, which run through all the technical domains. Careful consideration has been given to how these domains and strands are addressed, beginning with the Early Years Foundation Stage and continuing through each subsequent year group. This creates a spiral curriculum, where key concepts are revisited at increasing levels of complexity, allowing pupils to build upon prior knowledge and skills, fostering long-term retention.

To ensure comprehensive coverage of the National Curriculum for Music, the curriculum progression map specifies when and where each concept is introduced and revisited across the academic year and in each year group. This provides a clear long-term plan, allowing staff to ensure all National Curriculum expectations are met while offering opportunities for revisiting and reinforcing key skills and knowledge. Teachers use this map to inform lessons that

allow pupils to apply and deepen their understanding, while also providing opportunities for adaptive teaching and assessment.

In Years 3 and 4, pupils undertake whole-class instrumental lessons using tuned percussion, which is effective for learning pitch notation. Each unit of learning, in line with the DfE's 2021 Model Music Curriculum guidance, explores music from a different part of the world (including South Africa, the Caribbean, South America and Indonesia) and features a bespoke piece of music composed specifically for the scheme.

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE DOMAINS

The five technical domains are introduced in a way that builds complexity as pupils advance through the school.

Listening and Evaluating:

Listening to music is important to develop an appreciation for music but listening with a critical ear also allows pupils to recognise how music is constructed and how it impacts the listener. Listening and evaluating is therefore the precursor to Improvising and composing and Performing. By exposing pupils to a diverse range of music from various cultures and historical periods, this strand also fosters an understanding of the history of music.

Creating Sounds:

Learning technical proficiency with an instrument takes time, and the ability to create and control sound is fundamental to making music. This proficiency requires knowledge of specific instruments, including how to hold and play them, as well as the development of fine (and sometimes gross) motor skills and postural awareness. When it comes to singing, controlling breathing and voice modulation to create dynamic contrasts is crucial.

Notation:

In order to compose and perform longer pieces of music, pupils need to understand notation as a means of communicating musical ideas. They will learn that the position of notes on the staff indicates their pitch, and that the symbols used represent the duration of each note or rest. Our aim is for pupils to be able to 'work out' how to read a simple piece of music from a given starting note by applying the principles of staff notation, rather than reading music by sight or simply memorising musical pieces

Improvising and Composing:

Improvisation in music involves creating music spontaneously, without prior planning or written notes. This helps pupils build confidence, express themselves freely, and develop flexibility in their musical thinking. Composition tasks require students to plan and structure their musical ideas. This structured approach strengthens their ability to organise thoughts systematically and often use notation to record their ideas.

Performing – Singing and Playing:

Performing provides pupils with a practical reason to hone and apply their musical skills. It promotes group practice and collaboration, as pupils work together to achieve an aim. This experience not only boosts pupils' confidence and self-esteem but also enhances their awareness of themselves and others within the group.

The inter-related dimensions of music are:

- pitch
- duration (including pulse and rhythm)
- dynamics
- tempo
- timbre
- texture
- structure
- appropriate music notation.

CURRICULUM PLANNING

Our school uses the Kapow! scheme of work for music as the basis for curriculum planning. Where appropriate, music may be linked to themes and topics of other curriculum areas, however, these links must be genuine and designed to support the learning in music.

Through Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils will be taught to:

- control sounds through singing and playing,
- create and develop musical ideas,
- respond to a variety of music from different times and cultures,
- review individual and group musical activities,
- listen with concentration and to internalise and recall sounds with increasing aural memory.

Throughout, the teaching will focus on the seven elements of pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture and structure.

In addition, at Key Stage 2,

- singing in two parts, (as well as unison) is required,
- digital technologies should be used to capture change and combine sounds.

Throughout the year, there are also additional music projects that pupils participate in, to support both their music learning and enjoyment of music. For example: class assemblies must include a musical element, Christmas concerts, and end of term productions. The school partners with both Wandsworth Music and World Heart Beat to enrich the music curriculum and engage in projects that culminate in performance opportunities. Children that learn an instrument through individual peripatetic lessons are given the opportunity to perform each term to both the parents and the school.

THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

The Kapow! Scheme includes units of learning designed specifically for the Early Years. We teach music in reception classes as an integral part of the topic work covered during the year. As the reception class is part of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum, we relate the musical aspects of the children's work to the objectives set out in the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) which underpin the curriculum planning for children aged three to five, including personal and social development. For example, counting songs foster a child's mathematical ability, and songs from different cultures increase a child's knowledge and understanding of the world.

LESSON STRUCTURE

Music is taught through discrete meaningful lessons that take place weekly. Six units of work are taught a year, each systematically building on the last to ensure there is continuous opportunities to practice learnt skills and knowledge. Each lesson begins with a retrieval activity linked to the previous lesson to move knowledge from pupils' working memory to their long-term memory. New learning is introduced in small, manageable steps. Kapow provides videos to support teacher subject knowledge wherever there might be gaps. There is an opportunity to make music through either singing or with instruments through an activity and often is followed by a short performance to the class. Pupils work in pairs or groups, depending on the activity and the lesson.

ASSESSMENT

Children demonstrate their ability in music in a variety of different ways. Teachers will assess children's work in music by making informal judgements as they observe them during lessons. On completion of a piece of work, the teacher assesses the work and gives oral or written feedback, as necessary, to inform future progress. Older pupils are encouraged to make judgements about how they can improve their own work.

ADDITIONAL MUSIC TEACHING

Children in all years have the opportunity to learn to play the piano or a woodwind instrument through World Heart Beat. These lessons are in the school day. Parents pay for these lessons directly to World Heart Beat. Where a pupil premium child wants to learn an instrument then Riversdale will pay the cost of these lessons.

There are also extra-curricular club opportunities offered to children throughout the year, where they will develop singing skills or instrument ability depending on the nature of the club.

We believe that music enriches the lives of people, and so we wish to involve as many children as possible in musical activities. We participate in large school choirs. We have seasonal choirs which every child in years R-6 has the opportunity to be a part of. In addition, we have weekly music assemblies where students sing, listen and respond to a range of music.

INCLUSION

At our school, music plays a key role in the curriculum for all children. Music forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our music teaching, we provide learning opportunities that enable all pupils to show progress. We strive to meet the needs of those pupils with special educational needs, those with disabilities, those with special gifts and talents, and those learning English as an additional language, and we take all reasonable steps to achieve this. For further details, see separate policies: SEND, English as an Additional Language (EAL).

We enable pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning music. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, e.g. in a musical festival at another school, we carry out a risk assessment prior to the activity, to ensure that the activity is safe and appropriate for all pupils.

IMPACT

The impact of our music lessons is constantly monitored through both formative and summative assessment opportunities. Each lesson includes guidance to support teachers in assessing pupils against the learning objectives and at the end of each unit there is often a performance element where teachers can make a summative assessment of pupils' learning. Knowledge organisers for each unit support pupils by providing a highly visual record of the key learning from the unit, encouraging recall of practical skills, key knowledge and vocabulary.

Children will:

- Be confident performers, composers and listeners and will be able to express themselves musically at and beyond school.
- Show an appreciation and respect for a wide range of musical styles from around the world and will understand how music is influenced by the wider cultural, social, and historical contexts in which it is developed.
- Understand the various ways in which music can be written down to support performing and composing activities.
- Demonstrate and articulate an enthusiasm for music and be able to identify their own personal musical preferences.
- Meet the end of key stage expectations outlined in the National curriculum for Music.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Governors

- Ensuring a broad and balanced music curriculum is implemented in the school.
- Ensuring the school's music curriculum is accessible to all pupils.

Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher (Quality of Education)

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring the school's music curriculum is implemented consistently.
- Ensuring appropriate resources are allocated to the music curriculum.
- Ensuring all pupils are appropriately supported.
- Appointing a member of staff to lead on the school's approach to teaching music.

Subject Leader

- Preparing policy documents, curriculum plans and schemes of work for music.

- Reviewing changes to the national curriculum and advising on their implementation.
- Monitoring the learning and teaching of music, providing support for staff where necessary.
- Organising the sourcing of and deployment of resources and carrying out an annual audit of all music resources.
- Advising on the contribution of music to other curriculum areas.
- Keeping up to date with developments in music education, passing this on to other members of staff. This could include leading staff meetings and providing staff members with the appropriate training, working alongside colleagues etc...
- Monitoring and evaluating progress in music and liaising with senior leadership on any action necessary.
- Liaising with appropriate bodies e.g. other primary schools and secondary schools, governors, the LA etc. concerning matters relating to music.

Teacher

- Acting in accordance with this policy.
- Liaising with the music lead about key topics, resources and supporting individual pupils.
- Ensuring that all relevant statutory content is covered within the school year.
- Monitoring the progress of pupils in their class and reporting this on an annual basis to parents.
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of the subject to the music lead or a member of the SLT.
- Undertaking any training that is necessary to teach the subject effectively.

MONITORING & REVIEW

This policy is monitored and reviewed by the music subject leader.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.